(c) if so, the details thereof with arrangements to be finalised for such tie-up;

(d) whether the country would be benefitted from this deal in any way; and

(e) if so, the details thereof with amount involved and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (e) The Indian Oil Corporation and French Oil Company M/s ELF have signed an MOU for R&D and market collaboration. Trial marketing of diesel fuel additives has been started. Fuel additives are used world-wide to improve the quality of fuel, reduce smoke etc.

Permission to ONGC to File Writ Petition against Ministry of Labour

4973. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has given permission to ONGC for filing a writ petition no. 490 of 1999 against Union of India, Ministry of Labour & others in respect of Employees Pension Scheme-1995 (Act No. 25 of 1996);

(b) whether functional Board of Directors of ONGC have any personal interest against filing of above writ petition;

(c) whether Ministry has any responsibility and duty for implementation of EPS-1995;

(d) if so, what action will be taken against ONGC;

(e) whether Ministry will direct ONGC for immediate withdrawal of aforesaid writ petition in the interest of dignity of Government; and

(0 if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) No Sir. In terms of Cabinet Secretariat O.M. No. 53/3/10/94-Cab. dated 24.1.1994, no permission is required to be given by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited.

(c) and (d) Para 39 of the Employees Pension Scheme (EPS)-95 provides that exemption may be granted from the operation of this pension scheme and ONGC had sought exemption under this para.

(e) and (0 The Hon'ble Supreme Court is seized of the above matter through a writ petition filed by ONGC as also a joint writ petition filed by Association of Scientific and Technical Officers and the recognised ONGC Trade Unions; and has directed the status-quo to be maintained.

Low pressure natural gas as CNG

4974. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether low pressure natural gas can be used as Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for vehicles in substitution of petrol/diesel;

(b) if so, the details of such technology being used in India and its prospect;

(c) if not, whether such study is made to get proper use of natural gas now being flared or wasted otherwise in the country;

(d) the quantum of associated and non-associated gas flared in Assam annually; and

(e) whether Government will draw a specific action plan associating GAIL and Assam Gas Company for commercial production of CNG to end national wastage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The gas is required to be compressed at 250 bar pressure for its use in petrol/diesel run vehicles.

(d) the non-associated gas is not flared. Around 10% of the associated gas produced in Assam is flared annually.

(e) Feasibility of production and use of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in Assam to reduce flaring has not been established.

Krishna Godavari basin LPG pipe line Project

4975. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether krishna Godavari basin LPG Pipe Line project is being expanded to double gas supply;

(b) if so, the investments proposed to be made in this regard; and

(c) when the work will be completed?